The face of public and assisted housing is changing at a rapid pace. The advent of welfare reform, coupled with new public housing legislation, has moved the focus of housing providers away from strictly "sticks and bricks" operations to more comprehensive service delivery systems. Housing providers are teaming with social service providers or developing the capacity themselves to assist residents improve their position in life.

These new holistic approaches are beginning to pay dividends in the lives of low and moderate income residents. In FY 1998, the percent-

age of employed recipients reached an all-time high at 23 percent, compared to less than 7 percent in 1992 and 13 percent in 1997. The current population survey data suggest the average earnings for all female-headed families with children have increased substantially since 1993 from $14,668 to $17,646. The percentage of public housing families with children deriving most of their income from work increased from less than 30 percent in 1993 to over 45.1 percent in 1999.

Harold Lucas
Assistant Secretary for
Public and Indian Housing

Additionally, the percentage of families with children who moved from welfare to work while residing in public housing in 1999 increased by 8.9 percent, and Section 8 residents showed an increase of 9.8 percent.

While these successes are impressive, *we can do better*. We can build upon our successes, learn from each other and make a difference in the lives of more families. It is with this in mind that we begin to codify best practice models that capture successful HUD programs and identify practitioners that champion them.

One of the best ways to ensure the successful replication of moving people towards economic self sufficiency is to uncover the underlying *principles* or "universal truths" which have been proven to be consistent in programs throughout the country. Moving people toward self sufficiency is a joint venture between a service provider and an individual or family, with the provider providing an environment for success and the individual taking responsibility for their own success. There are four basic

Mr. Victor D. Figueroa
Camden Housing Authority

Moving Low Income Residents Towards Independence and Self Sufficiency
A HUD Model for Low Income Public Housing Residents

We Want to Hear From You

Please review the economic self sufficiency model and tell us what you think. As an overall system, what are the strengths in the delivery system? What are the weaknesses? What are the specific factors of the model that you and/or your colleagues need technical assistance in to help improve the overall success of self sufficiency programs?

Send your comments and suggestions to the Best Practices Staff, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 451 Seventh Street, SW, Suite 3118, Washington DC, 20410.

stages of development that we refer to as the "Systematic Life Cycle." These include the stages of: Assessment, Planning and Design, Implementation and Operation, and Monitoring and Evaluation. Each stage is independent and must be followed in the specified order. More important, are the six categories or *principles* which form the basis of success in moving people towards economic self-sufficiency. These principles are:

1   *The Principle of Sustainability*: A process can only have sustainability when it is supported by people,

over ▲

resources, policies and procedures that allow it to grow and prosper over many years. A sustainable program operates long after its original demonstration or seed funding has run out, remaining viable even when its founders have moved on.

2   *The Principle of Partnership*: A partnership is a collaborative of persons with common interest and goals, each contributing valuable insights, skills, resources, and connections to create a group capability greater than the sum of its parts. Partners are the "stake

Ms. Cynthia McDonagh
Brockton Housing Authority

holders" who plan, implement, operate and monitor the process from start to finish. Stakeholders may be both formal or informal, but in either instance, there must be clearly defined roles and responsibilities which mutually benefit the individuals or communities that are being served. Resident involvement and participation in the partnership is essential for success.

3   *The Principle of Inspiration*: Inspiration is the energy which drives positive change. Motivation provides people with a reason for action. Inspiration both triggers and sustains the motivation that drives people to transform existing conditions, and is critical in raising low income residents towards independence and economic self sufficiency.

4   *The Principle of Responsible Management*: Responsible management refers to the direction or control of actions of a group or organization in a reliable, dependable way. Responsibility includes being legally and ethically accountable for the welfare of others. Unless programs are well-managed *every day*, the results will fall short of serving the needs or the residents and/or the community.

5   *The Principle of Integration*: Holistic and systemic solutions are required to adequately address the complex needs of low and moderate income residents. Problems cannot be addressed in isolated modes and solutions must be addressed collectively. The concept of applying the idea of wholeness to social situations comes from "systems thinking" which states that all parts of a system are interconnected, and that each part plays a role in the whole system.

6   *The Principle of Transformation*: Transformation brings about fundamental changes in the make-up of someone or something by altering its core being or foundation. The process must move participants from feeling separate, isolated and afraid to feelings of empowerment and control of their own lives. Transformation involves the belief that one is connected to the whole, that one becomes an integral member of a group that is working to reach common goals.

These six principles form the basis for success in moving people from dependency to self sufficiency. Regardless of programs, processes or approaches, a successful program must contain elements of each of these principles. In moving persons towards success, it is important to identify success factors that support these six principles. Every person and every community is different. It is critical to first assess the needs of the individual or community, to determine the problems, fears and dysfunctions within the community. Based on the assessment, goals must be established that directly address the negative influences within a community. These critical areas become the "success factors" or "critical goals" that must be achieved if self-sufficiency is to be accomplished and sustained. Each of the six principles contain distinct and progressive success factors that, when combined as a whole, lead to the ultimate objective of bringing about economic self sufficiency for low income persons and/or communities.

SUCCESS FACTORS

The Principle of Sustainability

Success Factor 1, Safety and Security: First and foremost, address the basic needs of safety and security. Residents must know that they are free from harm in their homes, that they can walk about without risk in their community, and that their children are protected when they play outside and walk to school.

Success Factor 2, Identification of substance abuse and other negative dependencies and dysfunctional behaviors and attitudes: Successful programs reduce crime, violence and unemployment. Eliminating dysfunctional behaviors and attitudes helps residents move from negative dependencies to

positive actions. A negative dependency occurs when the person or substance relied upon is unhealthy or hurtful. To be dysfunctional is to be impaired or severely limited. Addressing negative behaviors begins the transition of moving the individual or community from hopelessness to optimistic thinking.

Success Factor 3, Transferring skills and technology: Program sustainability can only be ensured by the transfer of critical skills and knowledge, including knowledge about relevant technology. Knowledge must be dispersed widely and efficiently. Persons cannot be forced to learn new concepts and new skills quickly. Success is only achieved when many people possess critical program and management skills and technological know how, and when there is an organized and orderly process of passing on skills and technological knowledge to others who can take over program positions as staff move on to other opportunities.

Success Factor 4: Investment in Youth Development: Investing in youth development, from pre-natal care through the ages of 21–25 years includes, but is not limited to skills training and development, educational and tutorial programs, spiritual growth and development, youth sports and arts activities, family counseling, etc. There must be an continued emphasis on changing future generations or else, the cycle of poverty will never be completely broken.

The Principle of Partnership

Success Factor 5, Involvement of Stakeholders Throughout the Process: A stakeholder is a local person or group affected by exist-

ing problems, who stands to benefit from solutions, or who has information or skills that make a specific solution possible. Key stakeholders are willing to accept leadership roles in resolving identified problems, and who have a major stake in the outcome of their efforts. Stakeholders are involved at every stage of the transformation process, however, it is never too late to involve stakeholders, even after a program is underway. Residents are the most important stakeholders. IT IS CRITICAL THAT EVERYONE BUY INTO THE SHARED DREAM! They must be integrally involved from beginning to end, as participants and decision makers if they are to succeed Potential stakeholders might include:

- individual residents
- resident associations
- Public Housing staff
- HUD officials
- local businesses
- non-profit organizations
- faith based organizations
- local colleges and universities
- Federal/State/local government agencies
- law enforcement officials
- citizen groups, etc.

Success Factor 6, Building Partnerships and Other Collaborative Efforts: Partnerships are collaborative efforts in which all partners contribute to the group, and can advance their interest in conjunction with the group's shared interest. Generally, partners have a clear and formalized agreement with community leaders about their roles in the overall development and implementation of program goals and objectives. Partners may include, but are not limited to:

- advocacy groups
- public schools

- non-profit organizations
- media outlets
- elected officials
- faith based organizations
- local colleges and universities
- government agencies at all levels
- private businesses
- law enforcement agencies
- HUD offices
- social services organizations, etc.

Success Factor 7, Leveraging Resources: One of the most common reasons for developing partnerships is to leverage available resources. The term leverage means positioning oneself, program or organization, to gain advantage or greater effectiveness in accomplishing something important to the desired outcome. Resources are those things avail-

Mr. Paul Calira
Hartford Housing Authority

able to help in accomplishing a goal including, money, people, equipment, materials and information, knowledge and experience.
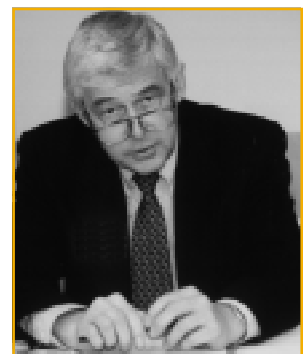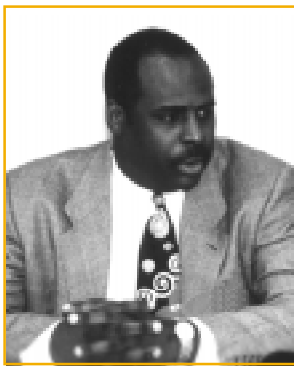
Success Factor 8, Recruiting and Keeping Motivated Volunteers: Recruiting volunteers includes finding and enrolling them, and obtaining their agreement in advance to perform a specific service. Keeping volunteers involves maintaining their motivation and willingness to serve once they are on the team. Residents who volunteer can also gain valuable work experience and good work habits. Volunteers should be given the opportunity to

grow both personally and professionally and feel that they are making a contribution to the success of overall objectives.

Success Factor 9, Effective Outreach and Media Strategies:
Outreach involves reaching out to residents and others in the surrounding community to raise awareness of available programs and services. This is done in two ways: 1) Internal outreach: making programs known to prospective participants within the community and 2) External outreach: promoting programs and seeking support in the larger community. Both types of outreach may use local media, newspapers, radio, TV, satellite teleconferences or the Internet as an integral part of the outreach strategy. The more comprehensive the outreach effort, the broader the audience participation.

Mr. Orlin Dotson
Armonic, Inc.

The Principle of Inspiration

Success Factor 10, Maintaining Strong and Committed Leadership:
Leadership is essential to the success of any program. Leaders are not afraid to take calculated risk and should be identified from various resources. Residents or program managers, acting as leaders, are important in developing or encouraging other leaders in the community to take on the task of improving the quality of life for all.

Success Factor 11, Identifying and Building Programs on Focused Intentions and Shared Values:
People are inspired and motivated by what they value. When a group's intention is focused on common values, they can sustain their momentum for extended periods of time. Shared values often include public safety, meeting the needs of children and youth, respect for each individual, serving the good of the community, personal and community empowerment, quality education and economic self-sufficiency.

Success Factor 12, Empowering Residents to take Responsibility for Themselves and Their Communities:
To empower means to give power, and while empowerment can be promoted by others, it must take place from the inside out, i.e. within an individual, group or community. Empowering residents to take charge of the course of their lives, i.e. raising healthy families, finding jobs and developing financial independence must be at the crux of the overall objectives. Full employment can lead individual residents to financial self sufficiency and eventually home ownership. Empowerment within a group can result in residents taking full responsibility for managing their housing development through a Resident Management Corporation.

Success Factor 13, Assisting Residents in Developing Their Self-esteem and Inner Strengths:
Enhanced self-esteem and inner strengths lead to more action and greater empowerment. Building self-esteem, allows residents to easily receive and use constructive feedback from others without defensiveness or other negative reactions.

The Principle of Responsible Management

Success Factor 14, Employing a Systematic Life Cycle Approach to Programming that Includes Needs Assessment, Planning and Design, Faithful Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation:
A systematic approach is pre-planned and organized. It is distinguished from an ad-hoc or reactive approach, that changes unpredictably and frequently to suit sudden influences in circumstances. A "Systematic Life Cycle" approach is both effective and efficient. It is effective because it achieves success, demonstrates decisive results and fully completes its normal life cycle. It is efficient because it produces results, operating in such a way that minimizes waste, expense and unnecessary efforts. The stages of the Systematic Life Cycle include:

a) **Stage I: Assessment,** A community-based assessment is a priority in designing a program. Programs must respond to the general needs of the community. This can be done through surveys, home visits, interviews or any other technique which will provide you with the critical information needed to develop a program.

b) **Stage II: Planning and Design,** Discussions are held among the collaborative stake holders and resident leaders to develop a plan that contains clearly defined goals, practical implementation steps and funding strategies, and mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation.

c) **Stage III: Implementation and Operation,** In this stage,

the design takes form and forces are combined to move residents in the direction of self sufficiency. Managers ensure that expenditures of project resources are consistent with the plan, while insuring continued participant improvement.

d) **Stage IV: Monitoring and Evaluation,** Mechanisms should be in place that allow for periodic feedback, and if necessary, adjustments to the program design. A contract for formal evaluation should be established with an outside consultant or local university to assist in making midcourse corrections.

Success Factor 15, Programs must be accessible to everyone: Successfully managed programs encourage involvement by eliminating barriers to participate. Accessibility includes:

Ms. Anne Beyer
Orlando Housing Authority

a) **Physical accessibility,** Programs and services must be physically accessible to all persons and accommodations made for persons with disabilities.

b) **Convenience for participants,** Services and programs should be held at convenient times and locations. Program hours and services should take into consideration work schedules and needs for child care, transportation and other items that may discourage participation.

c) **Customer service,** Positive staff attitudes translates into successful program delivery. Customer service is the top priority of staff. Staff should be sensitive to clients needs and situations and adapt to participant's needs.

Success Factor 16, Tailoring Programs to Meet Local Needs and Strengths: If the focus is not tailored to local needs and strengths, a great deal of effort may result in little returns. Tailored, or customized, programs are essential in diverse, low income housing environments, where the idea of "one size fits all" is inappropriate, and usually ineffective. Tailored programs should consider local conditions, needs, opportunities, and strengths and assess the size of the community, the mix of the housing types (garden, high rises, detached, single-family, Section 8, etc.), the geographic region and racial, ethnic and cultural compositions of the resident population. A program should also build around a community's strengths.

Success Factor 17, Management and Accountability: Programs must be managed effectively and held accountable to make sure they work as planned. A program is managed effectively when it serves its intended purpose and accomplishes stated goals. It is accountable when related decisions, actions and resource allocations are well-justified, well-documented, and funds are spent as planned. Program managers must rely upon subordinates, colleagues and partners to help in making decisions to reach prescribed goals. Managers must be stewards of the public trust and guard against fraud, waste, and

abuse which could ultimately discredit program efforts.

Success Factor 18, Promoting and Practicing Open and Honest Communication: Open communication is done without concealment; it is unreserved, honest and clear. Communication must be with all concerned, and include everyone who is affected by, or interested, in the outcome. This is particularly true for residents/program participants. Detection of

Ms. Patricia Rice
Orlando Housing Authority

disloyalty at any level could greatly compromise the success of the program. Open, honest and frequent communication is critical. Communication should be encouraged horizontally (between workers), vertically (between management and staff) and between relevant partners and stakeholders.

The Principle of Integration

Success Factor 19, The Integration of Multiple Programs Which Serve Multiple Generations: Successful programs provide multiple components which address the full range of individual and community needs (social, economic, educational, environmental, technological and political) for residents of all ages. Programs must include aspects related to a variety of preferences, needs, interest, and services, i.e. mental health, drugs and drug-related crime, violence, energy conservation, social services, child care,

transportation, family literacy, education, economic development, job preparation, and employment, environment, empowerment, safety and security, youth sports, cultural arts, spirituality, family and children, elderly and persons with disabilities, etc.

Success Factor 20, Working with Individuals, Families, and Communities as Whole Systems:
Programs must serve the multiple needs of each program participant, as well as the community as a whole. Programs must be designed to treat low income housing issues and resident issues as a whole. Individual needs and strengths can only be fully understood and addressed from a systems perspective. Good practitioners explore, identify, and incorporate into program designs all the parts that make us whole, as individuals, as families and as communities.

Success Factor 21, Acknowledging the Interconnectedness of People and the Ripple-like Effects of Their Actions:
Integrated programs that serve multiple generations and the full range of individual, family and community needs, succeed, in part, because people are interconnected. One persons fears or discontent can affect others and escalate situations in negative or positive ways. Consequently, natural links between us form an invisible whole. The change in one critical part, can affect the whole in dramatic ways. Thus, no single part is too small to bring about a change in the whole.

The Principle of Transformation

Success Factor 22, Removing Social and Cultural Barriers:
One of the most fundamental changes brought about by successful programs is the removal of long-standing barriers. Social and cultural barriers include widely held negative attitudes, stereotypes, prejudices, customs, languages, education levels, economic status and other boundaries which pull people apart. Social and cultural barriers are often accentuated by the physical structures, arrangement and location of low income communities. As a result, many low income people feel as if they are not a part of the larger community. Their feelings of separateness, combined with the actual occurrences of attitudes and actions based upon inequality, help to construct, and hold in place, powerful, invisible barriers between those who live in low income communities.

Success Factor 23, Emphasis on Positive, Proactive and Prevention-oriented Activities and Outcomes:
Transformation implies a change from negative to positive. As important as the positive ends are the positive means used to achieve these ends or outcomes. Positive activities and outcomes are those that affirm a person's hopes and dreams. Proactive and prevention-oriented activities and outcomes are those that recognize the early signs of problems and "head off" trouble before it starts. Such programs emphasize education, prevention and healthy alternatives, which frequently focus on youth.

Success Factor 24, Fostering Economic Self-sufficiency:
Ultimately, our objective is to transform lives and communities into becoming economically self-sufficient, i.e. supporting oneself financially. Residents who achieve economic self-sufficiency demonstrate that they are responsible for their lives and truly empowered, either by finding and keeping a job, or by starting and maintaining a successful business. They demonstrate their ability to sustain an income that supports them and their families.

Focus Group Session

Last week, HUD started a process to identify best practice models with the help of several self sufficiency providers. Mr. Victor Figueroa of the Camden (New Jersey) Housing Authority, Ms. Cynthia McDonah of the Brockton (Massachusetts) Housing Authority, Mr. Paul Capra of the Hartford Housing Authority, Mr. Olin Dotson of Armonics, Inc., Ms. Anne Beyer and Ms. Pat Rice of the Orlando Housing Authority met with HUD officials in a one day session to discuss HUD's model self sufficiency program and strengths and weaknesses within that model. The group refined the model which is attached for your review and comment.

Overall the group determined that within the self sufficiency model, the greatest strength was in the formation of partnerships to deliver services. The group felt there were seven main areas that technical assistance was needed to improve the model. The four areas are:

1) Holistic approaches. Housing providers primary mission has not been in the social services arena. Planning for and delivering comprehensive services that address all or most of issues that prohibit self sufficiency.

2) Diversity Training. As our nation becomes more diverse, staff must be more aware of cultural and ethnic differences and use this

knowledge to help promote self suf-
ficiency for different groups of
people.

3) Customer Service. Staff must
be focused on delivering quality ser-
vice that meets the needs of low and
moderate income persons. Train-
ing is needed to sensitize staff to
unique needs and reminders of qual-
ity service delivery.

4) Reinvesting Money in the Com-
munity. Hard construction dollars
continue to be the largest percent-
age of government dollars invested
in communities. Technical Assis-
tance regarding ways to re-circu-
late these dollars within low income
communities is a strategic vehicle for
promoting self sufficiency.

5) Principle of Inspiration. The
group felt that this was a very diffi-
cult topic and that motivating people
to change is a difficult task. Learn-

ing techniques for inspiring people
to take responsibility for their ac-
tions and improving their position in
life is an essential component for
success.

6) Parental/Adult Involvement.
Keeping parents and adults involved
in any community is a difficult task.
Exploring ways to involve adults in
all aspects of community life; edu-
cation, social events, volunteer ac-
tivities, etc. can help improve the
sense of community.

7) Volunteer Management. Find-
ing and keeping motivated volun-
teers helps any organization suc-
ceed. Volunteers are valuable re-
source that must be managed just
as rigorously as any budget. Pro-
viding rewards and motivation for
volunteers is useful for successful
programs.

2000 Best Practice Nominations

It is time to start thinking about the
2000 Best Practice nomination pro-
cess. We have revamped the nomi-
nation process and you will be able
to submit nominations through our
website. Take a look at your self
sufficiency program and think about
the aspects of the model that you
do very well. The website nomina-
tion process will be open soon, so
check out the website at
www.hud.gov/bestpractices/.

WE LOOK FORWARD TO YOUR NOMINATIONS.